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NSA review completed



Ninth Report

**COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF
THE VIETNAM AND LAOS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS**

**(This report covers the week from
13 April through 19 April 1973)**

*This memorandum has been prepared jointly by the
Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense*

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The Key Points

- Infiltration of North Vietnamese combat troops into South Vietnam has almost certainly now come to an end for this dry season. Infiltration of civil and military specialists has slowed but not stopped.
- The evidence is considerably firmer this week than it was last that one of the two NVA divisions which may have recently moved north across the DMZ has in fact left the battle zone and relocated in central North Vietnam.
- Heavy North Vietnamese logistic activity, however, continues all along the Ho Chi Minh trail. Hard evidence shows that the NVA now has large stockpiles of munitions in Quang Tri Province.
- The number of combat incidents initiated by the Communists continued at moderate levels in both South Vietnam and Laos.

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The Details

NOTE: This is the ninth in a series of reports detailing recently received evidence of (a) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military materiel toward and into South Vietnam, and (b) Communist-instigated combat activity in violation of the Vietnam and Laos settlement agreements.

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A. Infiltration and Redeployments of North Vietnamese Personnel

1. Only one new special purpose infiltration group was detected leaving North Vietnam during the reporting period. Twelve other special purpose groups, which probably left North Vietnam three to four weeks ago, were detected for the first time in the Laos Panhandle and Cambodia. Taken together, these groups probably contain less than 300 North Vietnamese personnel. The last detected infiltration group of combat replacement personnel started its journey south from North Vietnam on 11 March. It is becoming increasingly clear that the infiltration of personnel from North Vietnam is now coming to an end for the 1972-73 dry season. (ANNEX II contains a more detailed discussion, [redacted] of the information pertaining to North Vietnamese infiltration which was received during the past week.)

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2. The headquarters of the 312th NVA Division--one of the two North Vietnamese divisions which we reported last week as possibly returning to North Vietnam from Quang Tri Province--has now been tentatively identified west of Vinh in Nghe An Province, some 140 miles north of its late March location. Although we have no recent information on the location of the division's subordinate regiments, they

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were last located in northern South Vietnam in late 1972 - early 1973. A move this far north by the division's headquarters would suggest that the entire unit has returned or is now in the process of returning north. No firm evidence has been received during the past week on the status of the other division--the NVA 304th--which may also be moving north from Quang Tri Province.

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3. As of 17 April, three North Vietnamese SA-2 sites near Khe Sanh in Quang Tri Province were occupied. A fourth firing battalion of the North Vietnamese SAM regiment known to be in the Khe Sanh area was not observed [] but was observed as recently []. Newly received evidence indicates that there may in fact be five firing battalions subordinate to this SAM regiment, but we have seen only four of them equipped and operational at the same time. A preliminary field report received earlier in the week which suggested that the North Vietnamese had installed "dummy" launchers and missiles at one of the SA-2 sites has turned out to be incorrect.

B. Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies Toward and Into South Vietnam and Laos

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4. The level of Communist logistic activity remained high during the reporting period in both northern South Vietnam and southern Laos. Most significant, we received hard evidence of large North Vietnamese stockpiles of weapons and ammunition presently in place in Quang Tri Province. Vehicle activity was heavy in both GVN MR-1 and throughout the Laos Panhandle. The flow of traffic entering the Laotian Panhandle from North Vietnam remained at the same level as the previous week. In the southern part of North Vietnam, new evidence received during the week shows a substantial flow of goods--probably both civilian and military--southward through the North Vietnamese Panhandle. (See ANNEX III, [] for more specific information on this point.)

5. The following instances of Communist logistic activity were observed in South Vietnam during

the period. Activity observed in South Vietnam probably reflects supplies which have recently entered the country. (The map on the following page shows the roads and route numbers which appear below.)

- (a) During the period 10 through 12 April, over 80 tons of cargo were shipped by NVA logistic units operating in northern Quang Tri Province. The source and ultimate destination of these shipments could not be determined.
- (b) On 12 April, 63 vehicles assigned to an NVA logistic unit operating in Quang Tri Province picked up cargo at Dong Hoi, North Vietnam, and transported it into South Vietnam. The type of cargo could not be determined.
- (c) During the period 13 through 18 April, there were 106 southbound NVA cargo vehicles observed moving on Route 1033 in the western DMZ.
- (d) On 15 April, a major NVA logistics unit operating in the border area of northern GVN MR 1 and Laos had over 8,000 tons of supplies in storage, of which 7,700 tons were weapons and ammunition. It is not known whether this materiel had recently entered the country.
- (e) the following NVA logistic activity was observed on roads in northern South Vietnam:
 - (1) 8 cargo trucks were traveling on Route 548 in the A Shau Valley region west of Hue (5 south, 1 north, 2 parked).
 - (2) On Route 547 southwest of Hue 8 cargo trucks were observed



(1 eastbound, 2 westbound, 5 parked).

(3) There were 71 cargo vehicles on Route 9 between Dong Ha and Khe Sanh (29 eastbound, 10 westbound, 32 parked).

(4) 26 cargo trucks were reported on Route 616 southeast of Khe Sanh (17 northbound, 2 southbound, 7 parked).

25X1 (f) [] 45 cargo vehicles were reported on Route 9 west of Dong Ha (38 westbound, 7 parked).

(g) Recent evidence indicates that the road previously observed being reconstructed by the Communists southward from Mimot, Cambodia, now extends into South Vietnam's Tay Ninh Province. The rebuilt road provides a connection between Route 13 in Tay Ninh Province and Route 7 in southeastern Cambodia, and by-passes the legal re-supply check point at Xa Mat.

6. During the reporting period the following indications of North Vietnamese logistic activity in southern Laos were noted. Historical precedent would suggest that much of this activity probably involved supplies destined for South Vietnam.

(a) Vehicle activity was observed on Route 99 during the reporting period as follows:

25X1 (1) [] 53 cargo vehicles were reported on the route between Muong Nong and its intersection with Route 96 south of Ban Bac (9 northbound, 31 southbound, 13 parked).

25X1 (2) [] there were 96 cargo trucks reported on the route

west of Ban Bac (31 northbound,
65 southbound).

(3) [] there was a total
of 22 cargo vehicles reported
southwest of Muong Nong (9 north-
bound, 12 southbound, 1 parked).

(4) [] 72 cargo trucks
were traveling on the segment
between Muong Nong and the
route's intersection with Route
96 (22 northbound, 45 south-
bound, 5 parked).

(5) [] 41 cargo trucks
were observed on the route seg-
ment between Muong Nong and the
intersection with Route 96 (8
northbound, 18 southbound, 15
parked).

(6) [] 57 cargo vehicles
were observed on the route west
of Muong Nong (6 northbound, 14
southbound, 37 parked) and 144
trucks were reported on the seg-
ment south of Muong Nong (22
northbound, 17 southbound, 105
parked).

(b) [] 25X1
60 cargo vehicles were observed on
Route 9211 south of Saravane (25
northbound, 35 southbound).

(c) [] 25X1
44 cargo vehicles were
seen on Route 912 northwest of
Tchepone (5 northbound, 2 southbound,
37 parked). On 15 April, 25 vehicles
were detected on this same route (7
northbound, 2 southbound, 16 parked).

(d) During the period 13 through 19 April,
343 southbound vehicles were observed

moving south on Route 912 through the Ban Karai Pass and 277 moving north.

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- (e) [] 20 cargo vehicles were observed on Route 966 east of Chavane adjacent to the South Vietnam border (12 eastbound, 8 parked).

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- (f) [] 45 cargo vehicles were observed on Route 92 north of Muong Nong (9 northbound, 4 southbound, 32 parked). There were 39 trucks reported on this route [] (22 northbound, 6 southbound, 11 parked).

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7. There is additional evidence of the continuing movement within North Vietnam of military and other supplies which are probably moving to South Vietnam and southern Laos.

- (a) In the southern North Vietnam Pan-handle, 85 cargo vehicles passed through the area of a major NVA logistic unit on 15 April (43 southbound, 42 northbound).

C. Combat Activity Initiated by Communist Forces In South Vietnam Since the Ceasefire

8. In South Vietnam, the total number of Communist-initiated ceasefire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 28 January and for the last week (13-19 April) are shown below:

| Military Region | Total Since Ceasefire Level of Action | | Last Week (13-19 Apr) Level of Action | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Major | Minor | Major | Minor |
| MR 1 | 771 | 2,647 | 45 | 101 |
| MR 2 | 184 | 1,231 | 3 | 102 |
| MR 3 | 275 | 1,742 | 22 | 132 |
| MR 4 | 407 | 3,770 | 25 | 298 |
| Totals | 1,637 | 9,390 | 95 (104) <u>1</u> / | 633 (652) <u>1</u> / |

1/ Denotes totals of previous week.

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9. Some of these violations may have been initiated by GVN forces rather than Communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The table above and the chart on the following page, however, do show fairly accurately the trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the ceasefire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is generally reported accurately by the South Vietnamese, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated in objective fashion. In some cases, the Joint Military Commission (GVN/PRG) also reports violations of the ceasefire.

10. The following is a chronological listing of only the most significant "major" Communist violations of the ceasefire in South Vietnam that were reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces during the past week.

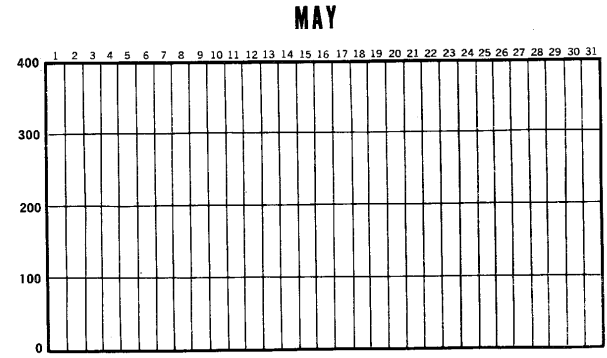
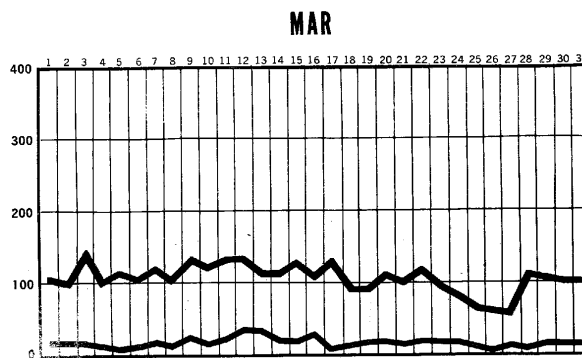
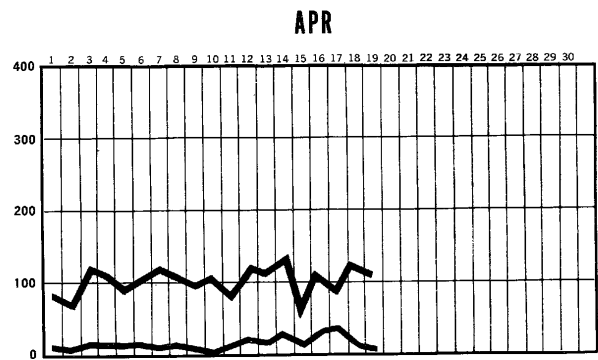
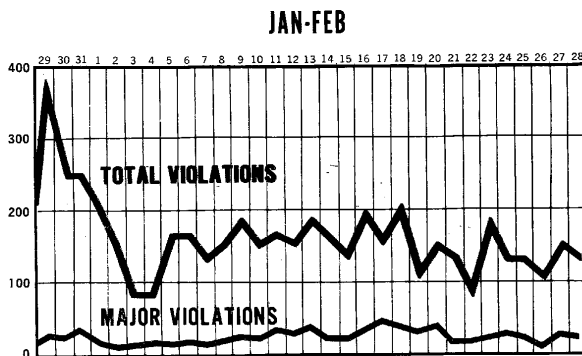
MILITARY REGION 1

- (a) On 11 April, 14 miles southwest of Hue, elements of an ARVN infantry battalion received an enemy attack by fire followed by a ground assault.
- (b) On 14 April, 12 miles south-southwest of Hue, an ARVN infantry battalion received an enemy attack by fire followed by a ground assault.
- (c) On 15 and 16 April, 8 miles northwest of Hue, elements of an ARVN infantry battalion received three separate enemy attacks by fire totaling 770 mixed mortar rounds. Two of the attacks were followed by ground assaults.
- (d) On 15 April, 14 miles south-southeast of Hue, elements of an ARVN infantry battalion received an enemy attack by fire of 67 mortar rounds.



CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

(28 JANUARY 1973 TO THE PRESENT)



- (e) On 16 April, 15 miles southwest of Hue, elements of an ARVN infantry battalion received an enemy attack by fire of 90 mortar rounds.

MILITARY REGION 2

- (a) On 14 April, a VNAF UH-1 helicopter received enemy ground fire of an unknown type 2 miles southeast of Bong Son. The helicopter crashed and burned.
- (b) On 16 April, 2 miles south of Bong Son, elements of an ARVN infantry battalion received an attack by fire consisting of 65 rounds of mixed ordnance.

MILITARY REGION 3

- (a) The Communists continued to keep military pressure on the Tonle Cham area during the week, through almost daily attacks by fire.

MILITARY REGION 4

- (a) On 15 April, 13 miles northeast of Chau Duc, elements of an ARVN infantry battalion and a reconnaissance company received two separate enemy ground attacks.
- (b) On 16 April, 16 miles southwest of Vi Thanh, a VNAF helicopter received enemy ground fire and was forced to make an emergency landing. The aircraft was then destroyed by an enemy anti-tank rocket round.
- (c) On 16 April, 13 miles northeast of Chau Duc, a VNAF helicopter received enemy ground fire and crashed.

- (d) On 18 April, six miles northwest of Tri Ton, a ranger battalion received an attack-by-fire of 250 rounds of mixed mortar fire.

D. Combat Activity Initiated by Communist Forces in Laos During the Week from 13 through 19 April

11. Heavy North Vietnamese shelling attacks southeast of the Plain of Jars in Laos Military Region II forced Royal Lao Army (FAR) units in the Tha Vieng area to withdraw in some disarray on 12 April. Toward the end of the week the FAR units began to reorganize themselves south of Tha Vieng. By this attack the Communists have gained full control of Route 4 in Xieng Khouang Province. Elsewhere in MR II, there were five minor contacts east of Sala Phou Khoun and two west of Bouam Long. In South Laos, a significant Communist-initiated military action took place on 19 April south of Thakhek, and a flurry of incidents occurred northeast of Khong Sedone earlier in the week.

12. Following is a brief account of significant combat incidents which occurred between 13 and 19 April, and which were clearly initiated by Communist forces in violation of the Laos ceasefire agreement:

- (a) Beginning on 13 April, a government force located northeast of Khong Sedone in MR IV experienced a series of five enemy attacks. Several of the Government units were forced to withdraw slightly to the southwest.
- (b) On 14 April, Royal Lao Government forces continued withdrawing southward from all positions in the immediate Tha Vieng area of MR II in the wake of the 12 April shelling attacks. There were no signs of pursuit by the enemy, although several friendly units were ambushed as they attempted to withdraw across the Nam Gniap River southeast of Tha Vieng.

- (c) On 15 April, Government forces successfully crossed the Nam Gniap river under Lao Air Force cover and continued withdrawing southwestward from the Tha Vieng area. These troops were not further harassed during the day; however, an enemy force of undetermined size attacked a Government defensive position northeast of the FAR base at Pha Dong, forcing the defenders to abandon the position. (Pha Dong is 30 kilometers west of Tha Vieng).
- (d) On 16 April, there was only light activity countrywide as withdrawing Government units south of Tha Vieng began to stabilize and regroup.
- (e) On 17 April, activity again was light. Government elements continued to regroup southwest of Tha Vieng without incident.
- (f) On 18 April, the only activity reported in MR II was a company-size ambush of a FAR unit northeast of Pha Dong. Activity elsewhere in Laos remained at a low level.
- (g) On 19 April, a Government company was forced to abandon its position southeast of Thakhek in MR III after it came under heavy mortar attack. The withdrawing company subsequently was ambushed and dispersed. No other significant activity was reported.

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ANNEX II

Post-Ceasefire Infiltration of North Vietnamese
Personnel to the South

1. Thirteen special-purpose infiltration groups composed of civilian and military specialists were initially detected during the reporting period. One of these groups was detected in the Dong Hoi area of North Vietnam while the remainder were detected in the central portion of the Laos Panhandle between 10 and 14 April, suggesting that they probably departed North Vietnam in late March. One regular group of combat replacement personnel--Group No. 1003--also was detected for the first time during the reporting period, but it was previously gap-filled, and does not represent new infiltration of combat troops. (When detected, the group was in Cambodia.)

2. The reduced level of detections of special-purpose groups both in North Vietnam and the Laos Panhandle during recent weeks indicates that the dry season infiltration of specialists may be coming to an end. In the past few weeks, only a small number of special-purpose groups have been detected in North Vietnam starting south. It is now evident, moreover, that the infiltration of combat troops in this dry season has ceased--the last observed departure of a regular infiltration group from North Vietnam occurred on 11 March.

3. The table on the following page lists those infiltration groups which were detected in the pipeline for the first time during the past week.

Infiltration Groups Initially Reported
During the Past Week

| <u>Group Designator</u> | <u>Strength</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Date of Detection</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 1003 | Unk | Cambodia | 11 April |
| A213 | 3 | Cambodia | 11 April |
| A427 | 31 | South Laos | 10 April |
| DB278 | 10 | South Laos | 14 April |
| QL230 | Unk | South Laos | 14 April |
| QL272 | 100 | South Laos | 12 April |
| QL293 | Unk | South Laos | 14 April |
| QL323 | 66 | South Laos | 12 April |
| QL801 | 10 | North Vietnam | 6 April |
| Y181 | 16 | South Laos | 12 April |
| Y283 | 16 | South Laos | 14 April |
| Y540 | Unk | South Laos | 15 April |
| Z102 | Unk | South Laos | 15 April |
| Z802 | 41 | South Laos | 15 April |

ANNEX III

Recent Information Indicating the Possible Future
Movement of Supplies by Rail Toward the DMZ

[redacted] photographic mission over North Vietnam has provided evidence of high levels of activity at the Thanh Hoa rail yard. Heavy rail traffic at Thanh Hoa, which is located midway between Hanoi and Binh, has traditionally been an indicator of a high level of supply movements by rail into Vinh. Vinh, in turn, is the primary transshipment point through which supplies are moved south toward the DMZ and southern Laos.

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There is no firm evidence at this time as to the nature of the supplies being moved on the rail line. The area of North Vietnam south of Thanh Hoa is a rice-deficit area, and some of the goods almost certainly consist of foodstuffs and other non-military products. There is insufficient information at this time to determine what percentage of the rail movement represents military supplies being shipped to South Vietnam. The mission readout showed one possible locomotive, 25 gondola cars, 19 boxcars, 17 flatcars, 7 tank cars, and 10 pieces of unidentified rolling stock at Thanh Hoa. In addition, the photography indicates that the rail line was operational all the way north to Hanoi--with the use of one rail ferry at the site of a still damaged bridge at Song Ma. The rail line was also usable immediately to the south of Thanh Hoa. The segment north from Vinh was cloud-covered and its status could not be determined.

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